



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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July 5, 2007

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley  
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – RANCHO SAN ANTONIO, INCORPORATED - RANCHO SAN ANTONIO GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Rancho San Antonio Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Rancho San Antonio, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Rancho San Antonio Group Home is a one hundred and six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Rancho San Antonio Group Home was providing services for ninety-four Probation children, nine Ventura County children, and one Santa Barbara County child.

Rancho San Antonio Group Home is located in the Fifth District.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection,

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

Rancho San Antonio Group Home needs to maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication. Additionally, the Group Home needs to allow children to receive unopened and unread mail. The Group Home also needs to maintain a sufficient quantity of clothes for all children and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:dl

### **Attachments**

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Executive Officer  
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS  
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer  
Brother John Crowe, C.S.C., Chief Executive Officer, Rancho San Antonio  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**Rancho San Antonio, Incorporated  
Rancho San Antonio Group Home  
21000 Plummer Street  
Chatsworth, California 91311  
Phone: (818) 882-6400  
License Number: 191202023  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Comments:**

Rancho San Antonio Group Home is located in an urban community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The yards and grounds are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, TVs, and DVD players. Books and resource materials, including computers with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Eleven**

**Comments:**

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Eleven**

**Comments:**

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Eleven**

**Comments:**

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **V. Psychotropic Medication**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

#### **Comments:**

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, the Group Home does not maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. Rancho San Antonio management maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.**

## **VI. Personal Rights**

### **Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

**Sample size: Eleven**

#### **Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls and have private visitors. However, one child reports that his mail is opened and read by staff and another child also reports that his mail is read by staff.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

### **Recommendations**

2. Rancho San Antonio management allow all children to receive unopened and unread mail.

## **VII. Clothing and Allowance**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Eleven**

#### **Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quantity and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, four children report that they are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

### **Recommendations**

3. Rancho San Antonio management encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

# RANCHO SAN ANTONIO

21000 Plummer Street  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
818-882.6400

## **Auditor Controller Audit: Program Audit Corrective Action Plan**

**May 9, 2007**

### **V Psychotropic/ Other Medication (Implemented)**

Rancho forwarded proof of completed psychotropic authorizations to the auditor controller's office. In order to avoid problems in the future we have assigned an assistant to the psychiatrist to organize and track authorizations to ensure documentation is on file. Randy McTague, COO is responsible to ensure monitoring and implementation of plan.

### **VI Personal Rights (Implemented)**

The corrective action plan re: searching mail was to develop and schedule a training of all teams on our agency policy regarding mail searches. This training took place on Wednesday March 28, 2007. Troy McNair, Rancho's Residential Director is responsible to ensure monitoring and ongoing compliance with the policy. Rancho's procedures for incoming and outgoing mail protects the privacy rights of minors in placement while at the same time monitors delinquent activity i.e. Drug use, gang affiliation and "terrorist threats" such as writing a letter to a victim stating "I will kill you," etc. The minor in the presence of staff opens incoming mail. The staff empties the envelope and glances at mail for any illegal or grossly inappropriate content. Mail falling under this category may be read by the minor, but can not be kept in their possession. It is given to the minor's family and /or Probation Officer rather than being kept by the minor. Outgoing mail is dealt with in similar fashion.

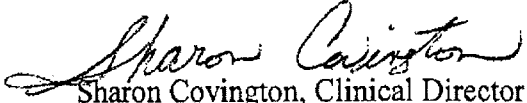
### **VII Clothing and Allowance (Life Book) (Implemented)**

3.21..."Contractor shall encourage and assist each placed child in creating and updating a life book photo album of items that relate to childhood memories. Contractor shall ensure that the life book accompanies the child at time of re-placement". Rancho gives residents memorabilia and encourages them to keep mementos and awards. Rancho plans events, takes pictures of minors during agency special events such as sports competition, holiday celebrations, graduations and awards ceremonies. Pictures of events are provided for keepsakes. We also provide minors with various certificates of achievement and sports trophies.

The statement of work does not say that the Life Book must be a **separate/stand alone** book. Rancho gives each resident a student handbook during the first week of placement. It is theirs to keep. It includes life skills, information about Rancho and previously, it included a Life Book section in the back of the hand book. We experimented with a separate life book and residents showed no interest in the separate books. Thus, our CAP is the following: When we re-print our Student Handbook we will return the Life book

section to the handbook and encourage kids to use this to store memories. Sharon Covington, Clinical Director is responsible to ensure monitoring and implementation of this plan.

Thank you again for the professional manner in which you proceed with audits.

  
Sharon Covington, Clinical Director  
Rancho San Antonio